



Three new sites to get AmeriCorps Farm to School members

Release Date: June 12, 2014

Media Contact: Ann Marie Ames
608-224-5041 annmarie.ames@wi.gov
Jim Dick, Communications Director
608-224-5020 jim.dick@wi.gov

MADISON –Sites in four Wisconsin counties will get added, hands-on support to grow their Farm to School programs. The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection's (DATCP's) AmeriCorps Farm to School Program this week added three new host sites to the program and continued partnerships with 14 host sites. These 17 sites will serve more than 40 school districts in 16 Wisconsin counties and will be recruiting for AmeriCorps members to work in their communities.

The new sites are:

- Goodwill Industries of North Central Wisconsin, serving Calumet and Outagamie counties.
- Town and Country RC&D and Eat Here, Eat Well, serving Jefferson County.
- UW-Extension Rock County serving Rock County.

"In 2013-2014 we reached more than 7,000 students with classroom lessons, developed new school gardens and provided tasting opportunities for more than 30 local food items. The AmeriCorps members are building the relationships to make that work happen," said Program Manager Sarah Larson. "I am excited to welcome new sites to our program and broaden the reach of our AmeriCorps Farm to School Program."

AmeriCorps members are on-the-ground advocates for farm to school in their communities. Community Outreach members work to connect foodservice directors and local farmers, recruit and leverage volunteers, and develop community networks. Nutrition educators provide classroom education, facilitate food tastings and maintain and develop gardens.

All host sites are currently recruiting new members for the 2014-2015 program year. To apply online, go to datcp.wi.gov and search for "farm to school."

Participating sites applied to DATCP for funding, which is provided by Serve Wisconsin through the Corporation for National and Community Service.

The AmeriCorps Farm to School Program is part of the broader Wisconsin Farm to School Program, which supports robust farm to school activities across the state. Farm to school activities are supported by a wide array of partnerships between local, regional, non-profit and state partners.

"Farm to school activities are gaining momentum across Wisconsin and are great ways to promote children's health by providing locally grown foods. They also strengthen local economies by expanding markets for Wisconsin agricultural products," said Local and Regional Agriculture Program Supervisor Sarah Elliott. "It is very exciting to see the growth in farm to school and to have the AmeriCorps Farm to School program be a part of it."

AmeriCorps is a national service program that provides members opportunities to learn valuable work skills while serving communities in need. Farm to School programming promotes healthy eating habits for students in grades K-12 and works to increase access to local foods in schools.

For more information about the AmeriCorps Farm to School program, including a full list of sites in Wisconsin, go to datcp.wi.gov/Business/Local_and_Regional_Food_Program or contact Program Manager Sarah Larson at Sarahm.larson@wisconsin.gov or 608-224-5017.